

occupied so much of the time of the General Assemblies in the past that related solely to matters back home, about whether the liquor board ought to be appointed by the governor or county commission and a host of local matters which, indeed, did occupy the time, efforts, and attention of members of the General Assembly.

This will not be a localized or local oriented General Assembly which we will have from 1970 forward and there will be little opportunity to act as if one were a representative of a small enclave or a local neighborhood.

I am not going to run through the 10 or 12 advantages that I have spoken about before. These are all before you in the memorandum which you have.

Before sitting down, I simply want to tell you that we had long and vigorous debate over this question, and I thought it was conducted in a very intelligent, sensible manner. I think when we had a great deal of time on our hands we arrived at a sensible decision. Now as we see the dawn of January 12 breathing down our backs then there is a tendency simply to vote to get it over with. I would hope that the strength that went into your earlier decision will not be dissipated, that the advantage of single-member districts will remain before your eyes and you will continue to maintain in this constitution a decision that has been applauded not only in the State of Maryland and the press in this State but by all the knowledge people and those with experience in General Assembly matters throughout the country.

I would urge you to sustain your prior position and to reject the amendmen.

THE PRESIDENT: Delegate Lord.

DELEGATE LORD: I yield three minutes to Delegate Carson.

THE PRESIDENT: Delegate Carson.

DELEGATE CARSON: Mr. President and ladies and gentlemen, I rise to speak briefly in favor of this amendment, and I would like, first, to discuss with you what this amendment will permit. It will permit the General Assembly in its discretion in years to come to decide what type of delegate districts there ought to be within this State but within the very severe limitation that there can never be a delegate district greater than a three-member delegate district.

This amendment would permit the General Assembly, if it saw fit, to establish

single-member districts throughout this State. On the other hand, if the General Assembly in its wisdom thought it was correct, it might also provide for a reasonable mix of delegate districts of one-member, two-member, and three-member districts.

My county is Harford County and only the politicians are in favor of this flexibility. I am not a politician. I have never run for political office, and I have no intention of doing it but I will tell you what this amendment will do for our county and what Delegate Gallagher's will do.

In Harford in 1950 we elected three out of four of our delegates from the eastern or lower half. Eight years later we elected three from the upper part of the county. Four years ago we elected three from the lower end, and now we are back to four from the upper end. For the Constitutional Convention we elected three from the lower end of the county and one from the upper end.

Each election time we elect on a multi-member basis because the people in Harford County feel they are best qualified on other than geography.

I do not suggest that the General Assembly should not have this power. I would urge them to have the power. Let the General Assembly have a reasonable degree of flexibility within this area. If you mandate forever in this constitution that there be single-member districts, I suggest that as soon as the constitution is ratified and delegates are elected from those single-member districts, it will be virtually impossible to change those districts, regardless of whether the change is desirable, regardless of whether single-member mandatory districts are shown to be good.

In summary, I urge you to vote in favor of the amendment, to vote in favor of some small flexibility and to avoid stultifying for all time a system that we are not even sure is relevant to us today.

THE PRESIDENT: Delegate Gallagher.

DELEGATE GALLAGHER: I yield two minutes to Delegate James Clark.

THE PRESIDENT: Delegate James Clark.

DELEGATE J. CLARK: Mr. President and ladies and gentlemen of the Convention, there are several very important reasons that I feel we should maintain the position we have already taken and reject the amendment which is before us.